

is crucial to society. On Thursday afternoon, Dr. Stuart Rosenbaum from Baylor University spoke on John Dewey and how this great philosopher is often overlooked because of his pragmatism. The lecture series concluded Thursday evening with Dr. C. Stephen Evans, also from Baylor University, speaking on Kierkegaard's understanding of the ways that humans influence each other through their relationships. We had a great turnout for all three of the lectures and a great symposium overall this year. Special

thanks to the Brandes Fund for Religious Activities, the Cultural Activities Committee, the Student Government Association and the Department of Theology, Philosophy and Classical Languages for their support of the symposium.

Jonathan Lys is a senior philosophy major with a minor in Greek and theology, and co-organized this semester's symposium.

FAITH & REASON

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Retirement of Dr. Mark Gilbertson



Dr. Gilbertson alongside tulips he plants annually in front of Langner Hall.

Dr. Mark Gilbertson joined our faculty at TLU in 1973, after having earned his B.A. at Augustana College in South Dakota and his M.A. and Ph.D. at the University of Southern California. During his 36 years at TLU he has been outstanding in his animated teaching of philosophy and ethics, sometimes imitating the appearance and teaching style of notable philosophers. During these years, he has motivated large numbers of students in their general education, as well as a significant number who have earned majors in philosophy, including current students Bria DiMarco, Jesse Hartman, Jonathan Lys, and Jeremy Ullrich, who completed their senior seminar course, "Art, Mind, and Morals," with him during the spring 2009 term.

Dr. Gilbertson has been a very well respected leader in our faculty and community, including serving during the 2008-2009 year as interim provost. Similar to the legendary Chinese creation figure P'an Ku in his love for flowers and trees, he donated, planted, and watered 14 trees in the area between Langner Hall and Blumberg Memorial Library, and, as many of you know, has placed tulip bulbs each winter in the area at the entrance to Langner, after having kept them refrigerated for about eight weeks in his home. His wife Pat encourages his love for beauty. In his ever-youthful appearance he differs from the even more legendary Chinese philosopher Lao-tzu also in that he is not leaving his great wisdom behind by reluctantly writing a *Tao Te Ching* of his

philosophy and then heading westward into the high plateau of Tibet, never to be seen again.

Norm Beck, Poehlmann Professor of Theology and Classical Languages

Texas Lutheran University names new Provost

Texas Lutheran University has named Dr. Edward Thompson III as its new executive vice president and provost. Thompson currently is provost at Marygrove



Dr. Edward Thompson III

College, an independent, Catholic liberal arts college in northwest Detroit. There he has facilitated changes in the academic and athletic programs to provide new opportunities for students, and has fostered greater cooperation between the college and the community, including creation of an Office of Community and Corporate Partnerships.

Thompson holds a B.A. from the University of Arizona and a Ph.D. in political science from Howard University in Washington D.C. He has served as a fellow with the American Council on Education and the American Political Science Association Congressional Fellowship Program. Thompson is also an active scholar, with numerous publications, presentations, and professional association appointments.

"Dr. Thompson brings a wealth of experience to Texas Lutheran," President Ann M. Svennungsen said. "His understanding of academia, his knowledge of both public and private universities across the country, and his support of our mission as a values-centered institution are assets that will continue to strengthen TLU."

The Department of Theology, Philosophy and Classical Languages looks forward to welcoming this new partner in our educational mission.

(continued)

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Dr. Jack Davidson with sons Colin and Julian.

New addition to department faculty

The Department of Theology, Philosophy and Classical languages is pleased to announce that Dr. Jack Davidson will be filling the philosophy position to be vacated by Dr. Gilbertson's retirement. Dr. Davidson comes to TLU from Rice University, where he currently holds a visiting appointment in philosophy.

Jack Davidson grew up in Japan, where his parents were missionaries. He completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Washington and received a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. At UMass, Amherst, Dr. Davidson studied with Robert Sleigh, a leading scholar on Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716), the German Lutheran polymath who made seminal contributions in linguistics, historiography, physics, and geology, as well in mathematics and philosophy. Since completing his Ph.D., Dr. Davidson has distinguished himself as a Leibniz scholar, publishing numerous articles on the great thinker, having won the prestigious Leibniz Society Essay Competition in 2003, and having been awarded several NEH Grants connected to his

work on Leibniz. Dr. Davidson's philosophical interests, however, are quite wide. In addition to Leibniz, Dr. Davidson has published on Aristotle, Locke, and Descartes. Currently he is working on a book about theories of human freedom and moral psychology in Leibniz and Leibniz's intellectual predecessors.

Prior to becoming a professional philosopher, Jack worked as an English teacher in Japan and later as a commercial fisherman in the Puget Sound and in Southeastern Alaska. Today, when he is not working as a philosopher, Jack spends his time with his two sons, Colin (aged 6) and Julian (aged 7), who keep him busy and usually happy. He also enjoys traveling, backpacking, reading, and listening to music.

H. David Baer, Chair of the Department of Theology and Philosophy

TO BE EDUCATED:

A book review by Norm Beck, Poehlmann Professor of Theology and Classical Languages

If to be educated is to be led from one position and perspective to another, Dr. Tom Wilkens and Kim Wilkens, together with other members of their family and in interaction with their culture, eloquently demonstrate what it means to be educated. Their book, in a most profound sense, is also our book.

During the 24 years in which Dr. Wilkens was my closest colleague on the Texas Lutheran University faculty, I and thousands of others within the community of this University were blessed to be educated in so many ways by him. That education has continued during the past decade in which he and Betty, who had been our campus nurse, have traveled and interacted in educational endeavors in many other areas of the world. In the broadest sense, he reminds us that, although we may be resistant, if we are

sentient beings we are constantly being educated by our interactions with others, especially by those who are younger than we are.

Kim Wilkens, co-author with her father, a graduate of TLU not too many years ago, provides an education and an articulation for all of us, including those who are closest to where she is in her life and faith pilgrimage. There is so much of TLU in these authors and in their book, a book that defines and exposes us.

The subtitle, "A modern father and postmodern daughter reflect on their pilgrimages of life and faith," provides an indication of education within slightly more than three hundred pages and thirty segments, each segment of which can be read separately much as we might read articles in a Reader's Digest publication, but with much more cohesion. The primary title, *Un-American Activities: Countercultural Themes in Christianity*, challenges us and alerts us to the educational scope of the work, expanding for us the purview of the book far beyond the arena that is TLU.

Samples of the educational topics among the 30 in this book include "Who, what, and where in the world is God?" "In praise of guilt," "Two summer saints," "Our gospel may be too small," "Some reflections on suffering from one who hasn't," "The symptom is corruption, but the syndrome is idolatry," "God does not pull weeds," and "Going beyond the Bible."

This book should be read and pondered by individuals, study groups, and by university classes in many disciplines. It should be included in some of our courses in theology here at TLU, especially in systematic theology courses. I would like to see it as the book read and discussed in each section of our FE 134 course during the fall 2010 term, in order to introduce all incoming students to the excellent liberal arts education that they will receive here. Tom and Kim Wilkens should then be featured speakers in our Krost Symposium that fall.

The book is available in our TLU Bookstore and online at Amazon.com. It will also be featured during our Department of Theology, Philosophy, and Classical Languages Reunion during the TLU Homecoming celebration this fall.

Invitation to department reunion

Our first Department of Theology, Philosophy, and Classical Languages Reunion in recent times held during the TLU Homecoming this past year was so successful and meaningful that we will continue it with our second reunion this coming November 6-7 during the fall 2009 TLU Homecoming. Please plan now to be with us if possible. The book that Dr. Tom Wilkens and Tom and Betty Wilkens' daughter Kim have co-authored, being published by Fairway Press, will be available for autographs and purchase

by that date. There is much of TLU in the book. We invite all of you to place this important date on your personal calendar now.

2009 Hein-Fry Lecture Series

On April 24, TLU welcomed Dr. Mark Powell, professor of New Testament at Trinity Lutheran Seminary and a 1975 TLU graduate, to present the first part of a three-year sequence of lectures aimed at advancing the ELCA's "Book of Faith: Lutherans Read the Bible" initiative. The topic for 2009 is "Hearing the Word: Lutheran Perspectives on Biblical Interpretation." Dr. Powell focused on the role that law and gospel play in interpreting scripture.

Dr. Powell is an ordained minister of the ELCA and an internationally known theologian and Bible scholar. He chairs the Historical Jesus Section of the Society of Biblical Literature and is best known for his work in areas of literary criticism, Matthean studies, and Historical Jesus Studies. He has authored over 25 books and 100 published articles on these topics. TLU was honored to welcome Dr. Powell back to campus to give this informative lecture.

The 2009 Theology and Philosophy Symposium:



Dr. Higgins (center), with symposium organizers.

This spring semester the department hosted the annual Theology/Philosophy Symposium. The symposium took place Feb. 11 and 12 and was organized by the philosophy majors. TLU and the department welcomed three phenomenal speakers to discuss the topic selected for this year, "One in a Million: Finding the Individual's Place in Community."

Dr. Kathleen Higgins from The University of Texas at Austin discussed during a lecture Wednesday night, Nietzsche's argument that the individual, in the truest sense,

FAITH & REASON STAFF

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Alumni are invited to submit articles of interest to Dr. Norm Beck, Texas Lutheran University, 1000 W. Court St., Seguin, TX 78155, if possible on disk, or send e-mail to nbeck@tlu.edu. Submission does not ensure publication, and *Faith & Reason* reserves the right to edit for length and content.

FACULTY

Faculty in the department of theology and philosophy during the 2008-2009 academic year include:

H. David Baer, B.A., M.A., Ph.D., associate professor of theology and philosophy
Tim Bauerkemper, B.A., M.Div., instructor of theology
Norman A. Beck, B.A., B.D., Ph.D., D.D., Poehlmann Professor of Theology and Classical Languages
Harry G. Foster III, B.S., M.S., M.Div., instructor of theology
Mark O. Gilbertson, B.A., M.A., Ph.D., professor of philosophy
Heather Hansen, B.S., M.A., instructor of theology
Phil Ruge-Jones, B.A., M.Div., Ph.D., associate professor of theology
Bill Russell, B.A., M.Div., Ph.D., scholar in residence
Carolyn Schneider, B.A., M.Div., Ph.D., associate professor of theology
Rachel Walsh, B.S., M.A., instructor of Hebrew and Judaism
George Wrisley, B.A., M.A., Ph.D., assistant professor of philosophy